

The Amish Voice



PO Box 128, 575 State Route 250 N, Savannah OH 4487

Office: (419) 962-1515

November 2008

PART VIII—What Is The Church

The Church: The Head and Body of Many Parts

I have a confession to make to you. Shortly after we printed the last Amish Voice I realized that I went from "Part IV to Part VI" on our study of the church. After thinking it through, I decided it best to call this "Part VIII—same as the last one" and than leave it up to our readers to fix my error on previous copies. Hopefully, I have not confused you too much.

Whenever I read Psalms 139, I can't help but stand in awe at how wonderfully God created the **HUMAN BODY**. David writes...



I will praise thee [God]; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. (Psalm 139:14)

Your **HUMAN BODY** is a marvelous living organism made up of billions and billions of tiny cells. There are more cells in your **BODY** than there are people in the world! Maybe as many as 10 to 100 trillion of them.

Here are some of the wonders of the **BODY**:

1. Our blood is circulated through 60,000 miles of tubing reaching to every part of the **BODY**. This tubing could be stretched around the world more than seven times (if all the veins, arteries and capillaries were laid end to end).
2. Every day the heart pumps 5,000 to 6,000 quarts of blood. The heart is an amazing pump which never seems to get tired and which never takes a rest.

3. An adult has over 200 separate bones. Also within the bones there is an amazing blood manufacturing factory. Blood cells are made inside the bones.

4. There are more than 600 muscles in a person's body. These muscles, along with many perfectly designed joints, enable man to move his arms, legs and body with amazing coordination.

5. The nervous system may be likened to a highly organized postal system or telephone system, carrying messages to and from the brain. Nerve Impulses can move at a speed of nearly 350 feet per second. They can zip up from a person's feet and back again more than 30 times in one second.

6. The world's most complex computer is the human brain. In fact, the entire human body is the world's most incredible piece of machinery. Men have made different kinds



of robots, but they have never made any robot which can do what the human body can do!

And with that in mind, it makes it easy for all of us to agree with David when he wrote, "*for I am fearfully and wonderfully made*"

The Bible Also Talks About A Second Body that God Has Put Together

As wonderful and amazing as the **HUMAN BODY** is, God has put a second body together and that one He calls **THE BODY OF CHRIST**.

For instance, please look at the following scripture in Ephesians. Paul writes...

*And hath put all things under His [Jesus'] feet, and gave Him to be the **Head** over all things to the church, **Which is His body**... (Eph 1:22-23)*

The church [born again believers] is called the **BODY OF CHRIST**. This is one of the Bible's most descriptive pictures of Jesus Christ and the church: the picture of the **HUMAN BODY** with Christ being the **HEAD** and the church being His **BODY**.

When we go to Colossians 1:18 we are reminded again of the same thing. Paul writes:

*And He [Jesus] is the **HEAD** of the **BODY**, the church... (Col 1:18)*

According to First Corinthians 12, the body of Christ has members, much the same way that the **HUMAN BODY** has members (feet, hands, nose, brain, heart, kidney, etc.)

Now ye are the **BODY** of Christ, and **MEMBERS** in particular. (1 Cor 12:27)

One Body, But Many Members

As you prepare to read the next scripture, please make note of the words **ONE** and **MANY**. Paul writes...

For as the body is **ONE**, and hath **MANY** members, and all the members of that **ONE** body, being **MANY**, are **ONE** body: so also is Christ. (1 Cor 12:12)

1. How many times do you read the word "ONE"? _____
2. How many times do you read the word "MANY"? _____
3. Which word goes before the word BODY (**ONE** or **MANY**)? _____

4. Which word goes before the word MEMBERS (**ONE** or **MANY**)?

Every person has **MANY** bodily members (nose, ear, foot, etc.) but only **ONE** body. Imagine what would happen if the foot got into an argument with the ear and said, "ear, all you ever do is hang there on the side of the head; what good are you? Or maybe the big toe yells out to the nose and says, "hey, how bout we trade places, I'm tired of being wrapped up in this sock all day long. Situations like that would cause the whole body to come under stress and turmoil. It would also cause the body to become side tracked from the important things in life. Paul writes...

¹⁴ For the body is not one member, but many.

¹⁵ If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

¹⁶ And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? (1 Cor 12:14-17)

Some church members at Corinth felt like they were less gifted, or not as important as some of the other members in the church. However, feelings and thoughts like that are totally false. Every person who truly belongs to the body of Christ (the church) is very important to God and has at least one or more special gifts to offer to the body.

IF THE BODY WERE MADE UP OF JUST ONE MEMBER, THEN WE WOULD BE IN TROUBLE! **Each member is necessary.** The foot may not be as gifted as the hand in handling things, but the foot is still part of the body. The ear may not be able to envision things like the eye can, but the ear is still part of the body.

Heart to Heart with Joe



Is one race of people of more value than another race? Is there a culture of people who has more merit, more worth than any other culture? Is there a group of people anyplace on earth who has more qualities within them that makes them more valuable than any other group of people? The answer is obviously—No!

When it comes to the human race, no person has any more merit or worth, goodness or righteousness than any other person. We all stand equal before God. God shows absolutely no favoritism nor partiality to any person or church denomination.

Acts 10:34 Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that **God is no respecter of persons:**

For a person to think that he is better than someone else, that he has more value and worth than another person, that he is more acceptable and useful to God than others, that God favors him and blesses him more than others—is the height of self-righteousness.

Self-righteousness is a dangerous attitude. It blinds a person and condemns him to be separated forever from God's presence. It prevents a person from ever entering the promised land of Heaven. God does not accept or bless a person because of some personal merit, value, or worth. Our righteousness is as filthy rags in the sight of God (Isaiah 64:6). There is no excuse for any person thinking he is better than others, that he has some merit or value or worth that is superior to any other person. God accepts no man's person (Gal 2:6).

The Lord tells us very clearly that people who think they are better than others because of who they are or who they belong to, are like smoke in God's nose.

Isaiah 65:5 Which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. These are a smoke in My nose, a fire that burneth all the day.

Dear Lord, we ask your forgiveness for failing in this area. Help us to see others as you see them through your eyes. Amen

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Since our beginning in 2000, many people have written to us, asking to be added to our mailing list while others have sent us names of their friends and family members. *The Amish Voice* is a free subscription and is totally funded by readers from across our great country, who appreciate the ministry and care to support it.

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Something else to consider: For the body to function and work in the right way, it is necessary to have many members. The same is true with the body of Christ. It takes more than just one believer to have a church. A church is made up of MANY BELIEVERS, just as a body is made up of MANY MEMBERS. If you are saved then you are ONE of these members. But you are not the ONLY ONE. There are many other believers who are in the body of Christ.

Becoming A Member Of The Body

So how do we become a member of the BODY of Christ? **The very moment I open my heart** and receive Jesus Christ as my Savior. But how does that happen? We can find that answer in the same chapter we have been studying.

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. (1 Cor 12:13)

If we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit takes us and baptizes us into the body of Christ. **This all takes place at the very moment you were saved.** It was at that very same moment that you became a member of this wonderful body!

Not Every Member Has the Same Gift

Let's go back and look at 1 Corinthians 12:15 again.

If the FOOT shall say, Because I am not the HAND, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? (1 Cor 12:15)

1. Is the foot part of the body?
2. Is the hand part of the body?

Are there things that the hand can do that the foot cannot do? Are there things that the foot can do that the hand cannot do? Can you run faster on your feet or on your hands? Can you grab a baseball bat and swing it with your two feet? Does the body need *both* the feet and the hands to really work and function in the right way?

The same thing is true in the body of Christ (the church). God has given believers DIFFERENT gifts and abilities. **John might be able to do some things that Milo cannot do and Milo might be able to do some things that John cannot do.** One believer might be able to preach but he cannot sing. Another believer might be able to sing, but he is not gifted as a preacher. The ear can hear but not see and the eye can see but not hear. You need them both!

Robert McCheyne wrote about two lepers who were once seen sowing peas in a field. The one had no hands, the other had no feet--these bodily members had wasted away because of the disease. The one who lacked hands was carrying the other who lacked feet upon his back, and the man riding on his friend's back carried in his hands the bag of seed, and dropped a pea every now and then, which the other pressed into



Content With God's Placement in the Body

A king once went into his garden and found everything withered and dying. Speaking to an oak that stood near the gate, he found it was sick of life because it was not tall and beautiful like the pine. The pine was discouraged because it could not bear delicious fruit like the pear tree, while the pear tree was upset because it did not have the lovely odor of the spruce. And so it went throughout the entire garden. Coming to a pansy, the king found its bright face as full of cheerfulness as ever. Said the monarch, "Well, little flower, I'm glad to find one who is happy amid this general scene of discouragement." "Your Majesty, I know I am of small account; but I concluded you wanted a pansy when you planted me. If you had wanted an oak or a pear tree, you would have set one out in the place I occupy. So I am bound to be just the **best little flower** that ever I can be!" The king smiled at the lovely pansy which brightened its corner of the garden, for its faithfulness gladdened his heart! Believer, you too have a unique place in God's plan—make the most of it!

the ground with his foot; and so they managed the work of one man between the two. Each of these men could not do certain things, but TOGETHER they were able to do the job. So it is in the body of Christ. Alone there are many things that we are not able to do, but when we work together we are able to do the job!

Every Member Of The Body Is Needed And Is Important

And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. (1 Cor 12:21)

Does the eye need the hand? Suppose the eye sees a delicious piece of candy. Does it need the hand? The eye is a wonderful member of the body, but the eye cannot touch or handle or grab or hold. The eye needs the hand to do these things. Likewise the hand needs the eye. The eye is important and the hand is important.

All of the bodily members are important and all must **work together**. Think about a baseball player catching a ball in the outfield. The ear hears the bat hit the ball,



the eye sees the ball, the brain tells the legs to start running in a certain direction, the arms and legs and body all move together in a certain way and then finally -- he jumps and catches the ball in his glove! For a successful catch all of the members of the body were important and needed. If the eye refused to see or if one leg refused to run or if the arm refused to extend itself, then the ball would not have been caught.

The members of the human body work together very well, helping each other and needing each other. This is the way it needs to be in the body of Christ. Believers need each other and believers need to help each other.

A carpenter's tools were having a conference. Brother Hammer was presiding, but the others informed

him that he'd have to leave because he was too noisy. "All right," he said, "I'll go, but Brother Plane must withdraw too. There's



no depth to his work. It's always on the surface." Brother Plane responded, "Well, Brother Rule will also have to go. He's constantly measuring people as if he were the only one who's right." Brother Rule complained about Brother Sandpaper, saying, "He's rougher than he ought to be. He's always rubbing people the wrong way." In the midst of the discussion the

Carpenter of Nazareth walked in. He went to His workbench to make a pulpit from which to preach the gospel. He used the hammer, the plane, the rule, and the sandpaper. After the pulpit was finished, Brother Rule arose and said, "I see now that all of us are **laborers together with God.**"

The apostle Paul writes:

I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: (1 Cor 3:6-9)

God wants to use all of us. Every member of the church is needed and every member of the church is important. If you are saved, you have a very IMPORTANT place in the body of Christ and the church NEEDS YOU! Without the hammer, the Carpenter could not do his job. Without YOU the church would be missing one of its important and needed members!

In the church there are some members who are very visible and very well-known. Everyone sees the Preacher because he gets up and preaches in front of the people. There are some members



who are just as important even though they are less visible.

There may be an old lady who is not seen by too many people, but she prays faithfully every day. One of the reasons the preacher can preach as well as he does is because faithful people like this woman are praying for him and helping him and supporting him on their knees. **People may not notice you as much as they might**

notice someone else, but this does not mean you are unimportant. See 1 Cor 12:22-24.

One Member Can Affect The Whole Body

And whether ONE member suffer, ALL the members suffer with it; or ONE member be honoured, ALL the members rejoice with it. (1 Cor 12:26)

If your thumb gets hit with a hammer, will your whole body be affected? How will some of the different members of your body react (for example, the mouth might say, "OUCH!")? If you have a stuffed up nose or a sore throat, doesn't your whole body feel miserable?

The same is true for the body of Christ. **If one member is spiritually sick, the whole body will be affected!** If one member is not being a good testimony in the community it will affect the testimony of the entire church. The opposite is also true. If one member of the body of Christ is healthy and doing well spiritually, then this will help the whole body.

When The Body Is Hurt, The Head Feels It

If someone steps on your toe, immediately your Head knows about it! A message is carried from your toe to your head. Whenever any member of the body is hurt a message is always carried to the brain and the head always knows about it!

When a believer is hurt, the Lord Jesus Christ always knows about it. He is the HEAD of the Church. When you touch the body, the Head feels it!

In Acts 8:1 and 9:1 we learn that Saul went about persecuting and hurting Christians. Then in Acts 9:4 **Jesus met Saul and said to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"** Saul was hurting Christians but Jesus said, "Why are you persecuting ME?" (see also Acts 9:5). Jesus was teaching Saul that when you



hurt the BODY (Christians) you are hurting the HEAD (Christ).

No matter what difficulties or problems we go through Jesus knows all about it.

When people make fun of us or speak against us or hurt us in any way, the Lord Jesus feels it! The members of the body have a wonderful relationship with their heavenly HEAD. We are connected to Him in a marvelous way!

The Body Must Stay Healthy

The human body must stay healthy. This is why we need to take care of our body, get enough rest, eat the right kind of foods, etc. The body of Christ must stay healthy. The body of Christ is only as healthy as each of its members.

If many of the members are sick then the body will not be doing very well.

How can a person be a healthy believer? What does a person need to do to be a healthy believer? How would you describe a healthy believer? What is a healthy believer like at school? at home? at church? **HOW HEALTHY ARE YOU?** If other believers were just as healthy as you, would the body of Christ be doing very well?

I would like to end our study today with part of a song that I know and love.

*But if we are the body
Why aren't His arms reaching?
Why aren't His hands healing?
Why aren't His words teaching?
And if we are the body
Why aren't His feet going?*

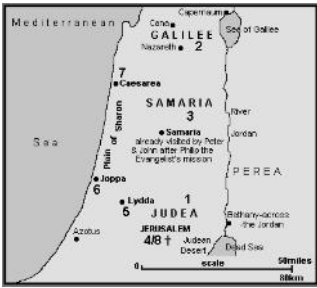
A greatest portion of this study was taken from the study called "The Church, God's Called Out Assembly" Provided by The Middletown Bible Church in Middletown CT.

Do you know someone else who would benefit from reading the Amish Voice?

If so, please send us their name and address and we will add them to our mailing list.

Simple Thoughts From Eli

The Day the Church's borders fell.



One of the most fascinating stories I cherish begins in Acts 10. The apostle Peter was in Joppa visiting and ministering in

the churches. Joppa is today a part of Tel Aviv, the capitol of Israel. Jerusalem lies southeast about forty miles and Caesarea is about thirty-five miles north from Joppa. Travel was mostly on foot and people often traveled in small groups for safety.

Israel was under Roman occupation at the time. This means foreign troops were in charge of the country and did all governing and police type of work. Chapter 10 opens with the story of Cornelius who was



a Roman centurion. A centurion would have charge of a hundred Roman soldiers. Cornelius was a deeply religious man and was a man of prayer. But he was an outsider to the Jewish and Christian world of that time. He dressed differently and was not circumcised. He was a Gentile, the name used for anyone who was not like us.

It was about noon and Peter was looking forward to having lunch with Simon, the tanner. While waiting for lunch to be prepared, he went up on the roof to pray. While praying, he went into a trance and had a vision of a great sheet with all types



of animals, birds and creeping things. The voice told Peter to get up, have your choice of animal for meat and eat. The problem was all the animals were not permitted under Jewish law as meat type animals. This repeated three times and Peter each time said "No thanks, I don't eat unclean meat". And the reply each time was "What God has cleaned, don't call unclean". When I was young, I used to think this was about eating meat. But it is about what happened next. See Acts 10:28.

And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; but God hath shewed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. (Acts 10:28)

While Peter was still thinking about what had happened, three men were at the gate looking for him. Verse 19 tells us that the Holy Spirit told him to go with them. The meaning of the vision was becoming apparent. God was calling Gentiles into His church! Up to now, the church was made up of entirely Jewish believers. This would not go over well with those who had never crossed a Jewish law. The man whom Peter was called to meet with was from Rome, 1,000 miles west of there. He wore different clothes, shaved his beard, spoke Italian (maybe also Aramaic) and was not circumcised. Besides all this, he was an occupying policeman! How could those believers ac-

cept a man of such different background? Would the other believers call him a brother on Sunday morning at church? Nevertheless, Peter went and preached one of the shortest sermons ever recorded. I guess sometimes we need long sermons and sometimes a short sermon will do it.

Peter got there and heard the story from Cornelius's side. Cornelius said he had been praying when an angel appeared and said to send for Peter. See Acts 10:32.

Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of one Simon a tanner by the sea side: who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee. (Acts 10:32)

Now Peter began his famous sermon in verses 34 to 43. Ten verses and then Heaven came down! The Holy Spirit fell just as it did during Pentecost! It became very noisy immediately. The Jewish believers were astonished that God was touching people they had considered unclean.

Marvelous as this story is, yet I often wondered why the angel didn't simply tell Cornelius what Peter preached later. It seems apparent that the job of spreading the good news of the gospel is given to us people and not to angels. What an awesome privilege and responsibility! Who do you consider unclean that God has called clean?

May God send someone across your path and mine to challenge our thinking.

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The Law of the Garbage Truck

I hopped onto the buggy and we took off for town. We were just driving along when suddenly out of nowhere, a team of horses, hitched to an old box wagon jumped out of a side road, right in front of us. My dad pulled back on the reins and our horse came to a quick stop; we just barely missed the side of the wagon.



The driver of the box wagon whipped his head around and started yelling at us. But my

dad just smiled and waved at the guy.

So I asked, "Why did you just do that? This guy almost ran into our horse and buggy and sent both of us to the hospital!" This is when my dad taught me what I now call, "The Law of the Garbage Truck."

He explained that many people are like garbage trucks. They run around full of garbage, full of frustration, full of anger and full of disappointment. As their garbage piles up, they need a place to dump

it and sometimes they'll dump it on you.

Don't take it personally. Just smile, wave, wish them well and move on. Don't take their garbage and spread it to other people at work or at home.

The bottom line is that successful people do not let garbage trucks take over their day. Life's too short to wake up in the morning with regrets, so "Love the people who treat you right. Pray for the ones who don't."

Attention Reader!

Our plans are to stop sending the Amish Voice to all "Current Address" locations by the end of the year. But, with a little bit of help from you, we will continue to send them to you without delay.

What we need from you is your first name and last name to put in place of the "Current Address" line.

Here is a sample of what we are talking about.

Current Address

1234 County Road 5678
City, ST 99999-9999

Please call or write to us, with your updated information.

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1. Blinking helps to wash tears over our eyeballs. That keeps them clean and moist. Also, if something is about to hit our eye, we will blink automatically.

2. Our body has some natural protection for our eyes. Our **eyelashes** help to keep dirt out of our eyes. Our **eyebrows** are made to keep sweat from running into our eyes.
3. The eye of a human can distinguish 500 shades of the gray.
4. Men are able to read fine print better than women can.
5. All babies are color blind when they are born.
6. A human eyeball weighs an ounce.
7. Babies' eyes do not produce tears until the baby is approximately six to eight weeks old.
8. The reason why your nose gets runny when you are crying is because the tears from the eyes drain into the nose.
9. It is impossible to sneeze with your eyes open.
10. Around the pupil is a colored muscle called the "iris." Our eyes may be **BLUE, BROWN, GREEN, GRAY OR BLACK**, because that is the color of the iris.
11. Your eyes blinks over 10,000,000 times a year!
12. Are composed of more than two million working parts.
13. Can instantaneously set in motion hundreds of muscles and organs in your body.

Amazing Facts In The Bible

"Is Hell real? Is Hell eternal?"

Studies show that over 90% of people in the world believe in a "Heaven" while less than 50% believe in an eternal Hell. According to the Bible, Hell is most certainly real! The punishment of the wicked in Hell is as never-ending as the bliss of the righteous in Heaven. The punishment of the wicked dead in Hell is described throughout Scripture as "everlasting fire" (Matthew 25:41), "unquenchable fire" (Matthew 3:12), "shame and everlasting contempt" (Daniel 12:2), a place where "their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:44-49), a place of "torments" and "flame" (Luke 16:23,24), "everlasting destruction" (2 Thessalonians 1:9), a place of torment with "fire and brimstone" where "the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever" (Revelation 14:10,11), and a "lake of fire and brimstone" where the wicked are "tormented day and night forever and ever" (Revelation 20:10). Jesus Himself indicates that the punishment in Hell itself is everlasting - not merely the smoke and flames (Matthew 25:46).

The wicked are forever subject to the fury and the wrath of God in Hell. They consciously suffer shame and contempt and the assaults of an accusing conscience for all of eternity. Even those in Hell will acknowledge the perfect justice of God (Psalms 76:10). Those who are in the very real Hell will know that their punishment is just and that they alone are to blame (Deuteronomy 32:3-5). Yes, Hell is real. Yes, Hell is a place of torment and punishment that lasts forever and ever, with no end! Praise God that through Jesus, we can escape this eternal fate (John 3:16,18,36).

"Where is Hell? What is the location of Hell?"

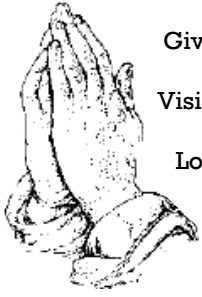
Various theories on the location of Hell have been put forward. A traditional view is that Hell is in the center of the earth. Others propose that Hell is located in outer space in a black hole.

The idea that Hell is below us, perhaps in the center of the earth, comes from passages such as Luke 10:15: "*And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to Heaven, shalt be thrust down to Hell*". Ephesians 4:9 says that before Jesus ascended into Heaven, "*he also descended . . . into the lower parts of the earth.*" Some Christians take "*the lower parts of the earth*" as a reference to Hell, where they say Jesus spent the time between His death and resurrection.

Another speculation is that the earth itself will be the "*lake of fire*" spoken of in Revelation 20:10-15. When the earth is destroyed by fire (2 Peter 3:10; Revelation 21:1), the theory goes, God will use that burning sphere as the everlasting place of torment for the ungodly.

To sum it up, Scripture does not tell us the location of Hell. Although we believe that Hell is a literal place of real torment, we do not know where it is. Hell may have a physical location in this universe, or it may be in an entirely different "dimension." Whatever the case, the location of Hell is far less important than the need to avoid going there.

Give Me A Vision, Lord



Give me a vision, Lord, I
plead,
Vision of souls and a world
in need:

Loved ones, friends—the
one next door
Then, let me see, there
are a million more

Give me a vision, Lord Divine,
Kindle with fire, this cold heart of mine,
May with unselfishness it burn,
Fill me with love and a deep concern.

Give me a vision, Lord Divine,
So charged with power that it will shine
Out to the lost in deepest night,
Wondering alone in their sad, sad plight.

Give me a vision, Lord Divine,
Without a limit or boundary line;
Help me to see a world in sin,
Not just the field I am working in

Give me a vision, Heart-stirring vision,
Open my eyes, Lord, today;
Show me the sighing,
Doomed and the dying,
Give me a vision, I pray

Katie's Korner

Drawing Near to God

I feel so blessed to be able to write for the Amish Voice. I sense that God wanted me to have a part in this and also in a prayer group. I know there are many people across the country that need someone to pray for them. It's important for us as God's children that we care for each other and let others know that God cares. That is one of the free



gifts we have from God is to show our kindness. So many of us don't hear God's voice.

Let's put it this way, we don't know if it is God, Satan or our own voice. I dealt with that at one point but after I was born again and baptized everything opened up to me. God has great gifts for us if we accept them.

When I was growing up everything was about religion. There were so many laws to follow but now I see that the only laws to follow are God's laws and none other.

Romans 10:4 says, *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.*

Christianity is a reality not a religion. We go to Heaven "by faith and not by works" (Gal 2:16). I don't want to sound judgmental but I would encourage everyone to study God's Word and seek His wisdom. God has greater gifts than we can ever imagine but to receive them as a gift, we must go to Him, repent of our sins and ask for His forgiveness.

How many of us can imagine what Jesus went through on the cross????? We all have our good and our bad days. We are all sinners, but we can always repent.

If you were sitting in an audience, I bet'cha

most of your hands would go up if I would ask you what John 3:16 says:



"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

"For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved." (John 3:17)

And of course we have peace, confidence, faith, and love through Jesus.

Sometimes, we think life is hard, or may seem like nothing's going right, maybe someone was mistreated, or constantly worried about something, but "remember, worry leads to stress."

Some might even look at life as being a punishment or we might have a lot on our minds that we should let go of.

How many of us just sit still and think? I've learned to do that and it's awesome what God can do in times like that. Several nights ago I was praying and I promised God that after my prayer I would sit still and listen.

This is what I experienced: I thought about



what Jesus really went through on the cross! And as I was thinking about what He did for us, I

thought, we cannot even imagine what that must have been like; He gave His life for our sins. We should be happy and joyful for who we are and what we have.

Too many of us don't stop and think how much we have to be thankful for. When we repent and give all our problems over to

God, ask Him for His mercy and forgiveness, He will take care of the rest.

The Bible says in Luke 15:7, *"I say to you that likewise there will be more joy in Heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety nine just persons who need no repentance"*.

I Timothy 4:12, *"Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity"*.

I Timothy 6:11,12, *"But you, O man of God, Flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness."* *Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses"*.

II Timothy 2:6,7, *"Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands, For God has not given us a spirit of fear but of power and of love and of a sound mind."*



The best way to understand all about repentance, forgiveness, faith and love, is to stay focused on His Word—the Bible; we can get all the answers from there because it is from the Father (I Thes 4:9). We can read, you yourselves are taught by God to love one another.

Thanks and God Bless you!

Katie Hershberger
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From A Woman's Stand Point

Which One Are You?

In many of Paul's letters he introduces himself as a servant of Jesus Christ and I was curious about the word servant. This is what I discovered. The word servant is defined as someone who willingly chooses to serve his master. I also looked up the opposite of servant and the answer is slave. A slave completely belongs to his owner and has no freedom to leave. So I am asking each one of us, "Which one are you?"



Are you choosing to serve God or are you a slave to a religion?

Romans 3:9 – 31

What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; ¹⁰As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: ¹¹There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. ¹²They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. ¹³Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues

they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: ¹⁴Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: ¹⁵Their feet are swift to shed blood: ¹⁶Destruction and misery are in their ways: ¹⁷And the way of peace have they not known: ¹⁸There is no fear of God before their eyes. ¹⁹Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. ²⁰Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

(you are encouraged to read through verse 31)

Romans 10: 1 – 17

Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. ²For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. ³For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. ⁴For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone

that believeth.

(you are encouraged to read through verse 17)

Hebrews 11:1, 2, 3, 6

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. ²For by it the elders obtained a good report. ³Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. ---- ⁶But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Have you given your heart to God or to a religion? Without faith it is impossible to please God so is your faith that which is pleasing in the sight of God? If you can't answer this question then I would advise you to study Romans and Hebrews.

**Blessings,
Barbara Keim
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Belton, TX 76513
254-247-2284**

Disobedience Rooted in Fear

"Then Moses said to them, 'No one is to keep any of it until morning.'" - Exodus 16:19



Have you ever seen God do something really good in your life only to find that you have abused the blessing He gave you? Such was the case of the Israelites as they were traveling through the desert on their way to the Promised Land. God was providing for them in miraculous ways. Manna was provided each day as their bread. God gave

Moses specific instructions as to how this manna was to be eaten. **God said each one was to gather only what he needed for that day.** No one was to keep it until the next morning.

"However, some of them paid no attention to Moses; they kept part of it until morning, but it was full of maggots and began to smell. So Moses was angry with them" (Ex. 16:20). God was

teaching the Israelites daily trust in His provision for them. He wanted them to trust Him one day at a time. If they tried to hoard, God put a self-destruct feature in the manna. Yet God also told them to gather two days' worth on the sixth day so that they would have manna to eat on the seventh day. Interestingly, this manna did not stink or have maggots.

For many years I gathered manna in business out of fear of not having enough. One day, the Lord decided that manna should be destroyed in order for me to learn total trust in His provision.

When we operate out of fear, we can expect the Lord to lovingly discipline us in order to help us learn to trust Him. There is a danger when we seek to "insure ourselves" against calamity. If your actions are born from fear, you can expect God to demonstrate His loving reproof so that you might not live in fear.

~ by Os Hillman

Brain Teasers

Answers—Page 11

Brain Teasers

1. 6:00am: since the clock is losing 24 minutes every hour, for every real hour that has passed, the clock will only show 36 minutes. Since the clock shows 3:00am, we know that 180 clock minutes have passed. This therefore equals 300 real minutes and hence 5 hours. The clock stopped 1 hour ago and the time must now be 6:00am.
2. Daniel is 7 years old and Rachel is 4 years old.
3. 335 strawberries. Ate 5 = 330, gave half to Jonathan = 165, ate 3 = 162, gave one third to Melvin = 108, ate 6 = 102, gave two thirds to Rosie = 34 left.

Amish Population Is Growing And On The Move

Large Families, Some Conversions

The Amish began arriving in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania about the 1730's. Their first language is a German dialect known as Pennsylvania Dutch or Pennsylvania German. They also speak English.

The Amish are also known as Anabaptists, a form of Christianity that resulted from a reformation movement in 16th Century Europe. The Amish have made every effort towards being modest and self-reliant through the way they dress and live. For example, they wear plain clothing and use little or no modern conveniences.

On average, Amish families consist of five or more children. Children under the age



of 21, make up more than half of the Amish population. At least four out of every five children

is said to join the Amish church when they reach adulthood. With such a high number remaining within the Amish church, it is no wonder that the Amish population has steadily increased over the past 16 years.

While the majority of the increase in the Amish population is due to the children staying in the Amish church, a small amount of the increase is from people converting to the Amish faith.

Reasons For Migration

The Amish main work industry is farming but with land harder to find, other industries have opened up to the Amish. Furniture making and small engine repair are just a couple that do not interfere with the Amish belief system and enable them to stay self-reliant.



With the Amish population increasing the search for affordable farmland is sometimes scarce in already Amish populated areas, such as Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Many families from the area have recently

moved searching for affordable farmland.

However, affordable farmland is not the only reason why the Amish have expanded into new states. A few of the migrations have been a result of leadership problems or church-related disputes.

Old Conflicts Revived

With the Amish moving into new states where the local officials are not aware of the Amish belief system, old conflicts that once plagued established Amish settlements are now being renewed in these areas. Some of the more read about conflicts involve building codes, outhouses, and safety features on horse-drawn buggies.



However, at the same time some businesses have been glad to accommodate the Amish by installing hitching posts where the Amish can tie up their horses.

Learning about and understanding the Amish lifestyle will help these new states understand the benefits of having Amish settlements in their states. For example, since the Amish are self-reliant, they do not add to the already strained public service systems like welfare. Another example is that Amish increase the value of the land.

Group Migration

An estimated number of 350 Amish families migrated to the following three states between 2002 and 2007: Missouri, New York or Wisconsin. During the great migration into the previous states, an estimated 520 families moved from Ohio, while another 470 from Pennsylvania.

A weekly publication, The Budget, is used by the Amish to let others know where they are, how their land is, and so on. In order for an Amish settlement to be able to use The Budget for correspondence, a settlement must have at least one minister and six families living in it.

Population Boom, New Challenges

Kentucky led the Amish population boom,

growing from about 3,000 to just over 8,500. Kentucky is just one of eight states that had a significant increase in their Amish population.

Ontario, Canada, also has seen growth from about 2,300 in 1992 to approximately 4,500 today.

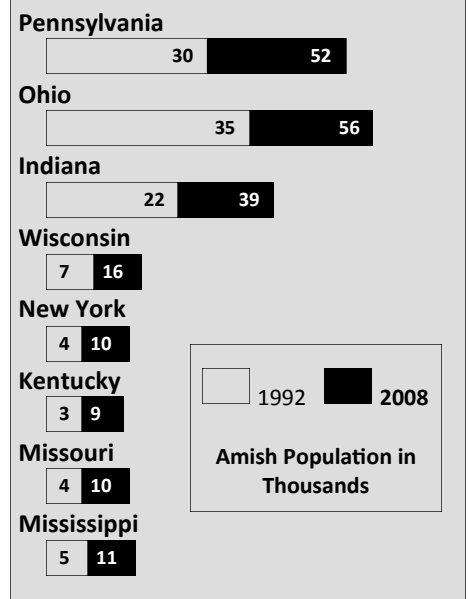
Due to the increase in population of the Amish and thus the migration into new territories, the Amish are beginning to deal with new challenges. For example, because of the great distance now that are created between communities, longer trips are avoidable. What this means is that there is an increase in the need for Amish to have access to "non-Amish taxis," private individuals who drive the Amish.



It is joked among the Amish that at the rate they are growing, half of the world will be

Amish and the other half will be taxi drivers.

The Amish Population has increased 85% since 1992. According to statistics, Pennsylvania and Ohio are the most populated Amish states in the US. However, there are many other states which are growing faster than Pennsylvania and Ohio.



Freedom From The Past

(1)

I was walking in the valley of darkness
Fear and hatred overtook me,
I was in my own world of selfishness,
Believing the lies the Enemy told me.

(2)

Feeling lonely, rejected, hurt, and confused,
No one could I trust anymore,
Always feeling unloved and used,
Turning away when you knocked on my door.

(3)

My feelings of anger grew deeper and deeper,
Not another person did I want to see,
Every day the mountain grew steeper,
And couldn't hear Jesus calling out to me.

(4)

With thoughts of suicide in my mind,
Who would care if I take my life,
O Lord how could I be so blind,
And not let you take control of my life.

(5)

One day I heard you, loud and clear,
I love you, My child, O let me in,
I care about you, do not fear,
I died on the cross for all your sins.

(6)

Please just let me in your heart,
I love you more than words can tell,
I will give you a brand new start,
So you won't have to burn in Hell.

(7)

I was ready and looking for Love and Peace,
But first I had to ask forgiveness,
And everything to Him release,
And get rid of all anger and bitterness.

(8)

Then I turned back to Jesus, my Friend,
And finally decided to let Him in,
He said He is with me to the end,
And under the blood are now my sins.

(9)

Born again, I now am happy and free,
Knowing I still have valleys to go thru,
Happy to know He will never leave me,
And will always be there to help me too.

(10)

Praise the Lord! I feel His loving arms,
Knowing He is always by my side,
Wanting to keep me from all harm,
I can now to His Bosom fly.

(11)

Thank You, Lord for not giving up,
Thank You, Lord for saving my soul,
Thank You, Lord for filling my cup,
And Thank You, Lord for making me whole!

I give all the Honor and Glory to my dear Friend
The Lord Jesus Christ! Friends don't wait til it's
too late, let Him in today. May the Lord bless
and heal all who read this. Come to Him now,
He will not turn you down!

Miriam Petersheim, March 4, 2008
Written by God thru my pen.

The Tale of Two Horses



Just up the road from my home is a field, with two horses in it.

From a distance, each horse looks like any other horse. But if you stop your buggy, or are walking by, you will notice something quite amazing.

Looking into the eyes of one horse will disclose that he is blind. His owner has chosen not to have him put down, but has made a good home for him.

This alone is amazing.

If you stand nearby and listen, you will hear the sound of a bell. Looking around for the source of the sound, you will see that it comes from the smaller horse in the field.

Attached to the horse's halter is a small bell.

It lets the blind friend know where the other horse is, so he can follow.

As you stand and watch these two friends, you'll see that the horse with the bell is al-

ways checking on the blind horse, and that the blind horse will listen for the bell and then slowly walk to where the other horse is, trusting that he will not be led astray.

When the horse with the bell returns to the shelter of the barn each evening, it stops occasionally and looks back, making sure that the blind friend isn't too far behind to hear the bell.

Like the owner of these two horses, God does not throw us away just because we are not perfect or because we have problems or challenges.

He watches over us and even brings others into our lives to help us when we are in need.

Sometimes we are the blind horse being guided by the little ringing bell of those who God places in our lives.

Other times we are the guide horse, helping others to find their way.

Good friends are like that ... you may not always see them, but you know they are always there.

~ Author Unknown



Silent Answers

Once a young couple lost their only child, a beautiful three-year-old daughter, as a result of a freak accident. Unable to justify this tragedy with their concept of a loving God, they went to their minister for help. "Why?" they asked. "It was God's will," the preacher told them.

The couple just couldn't accept that the passing of their little daughter could somehow serve God's will, and they sought out another preacher friend. He quoted yards of Scripture, trying to give them comfort, but his verses fell on deaf ears.

Finally, the young couple turned to a

frail elderly woman in their church. Surely, she could give them a reason for the child's death, but the old woman didn't utter a single word. Instead, she tenderly wrapped her arms around the heartbroken couple's shoulders, and together they cried the hurt away.

Sometimes when difficult answers are not easy to the complicated hardships of life, perhaps we just need to hush our babblings. Sometimes when answers aren't easy, our best statement is silent caring.



~ Author Unknown

Philippians 1:6

Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

The Inadequacy of Law-Based Living—Part II

Despite the books and chapters of the Bible dedicated to teaching believers their freedom from the law, Christians still try to find victory and comfort through law. The *flesh* drives them to self-righteousness and performance, forgetting only the righteousness of Christ living through us is valuable to God. Last issue we studied five characteristics of law-based living. Below are five more.

1. Rules foster a holier-than-thou attitude.

Morality becomes measurable—“*we do this, we do that, we are spiritual,*” interpreted: “*we are better than others.*” In a rule-based mentality—if one rule is good, more are better; the stricter the rule, the better. The tendency of a person who lives by



rules and wants to get closer to God is to create a narrower box, to give up more, to restrict more freedom. The result is not more victory, and certainly doesn't bring a person closer to God, but creates more religious bondage. Simply, just like the Pharisees, pleasing God means lots of rules.

2. Rules obscure the real condition of the heart.

Anyone can follow rules, but true spirituality is HEART-based. Much of what pleases God can be described as *in between the lines*. The sinner woman of Luke 7 broke all the rules, but in between the lines was a heart that connected to the heart of Jesus, far more than the religious man did. Churches are full of people who *do all the right things*, but inside their hearts are bound up with self-righteousness. Paul cried out in **Philippians 3**, “*That I may be found in Him, not having my own righteousness derived from law, but that which is through faith in Christ*” (v.10).

3. Law based living always makes one feel unworthy, unable to live up to God's expectations, and inadequate in His love.



The only thing law can do is condemn us by telling us where we were wrong, but the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus calls us to our righteous potential. Law is cold, objective and condemning, but the Spirit is relational and doesn't use condemnation (Romans 8:1) to control us. Living by the Spirit breeds SONSHIP. Living by law breeds SLAVERY.

Galatians 4:7 says, “*You are no longer a slave but a son.*”

If you feel as if you always fall short of pleasing God, it may well be that you still are depending on your rules and laws. If that is the case, you will never experience the unconditional acceptance of God. True faith is not about our ability to please Him, but His promise to live His life through us.

4. Rules are impersonal, have no grace and don't generate joy.

Living by the Spirit is a far higher standard of living—of righteousness and purity, because it is based on relationship with the Holy Spirit, not on a rulebook. Everything in the true faith of Christ is based on a relationship of love. Obedience to truth emanates from that relationship. The overflowing joy comes from a personal walk with a person, and hearing His voice (John 10).

5. Law-based living satisfies the flesh.

The flesh loves to serve God. Much religion and passion across the world is generated by the power of the flesh. But God has told man that we can not please Him in our natural man. We must die to our own ways, and abandon our will to His Spirit living through us.

Read the rebuke in **Colossians 2:20-23**: “*If you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations—‘Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,’ which all concern things which perish with the using—according to the commandments and doctrines of men? These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-*



imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.”

~ Bruce Lengeman, Door of Hope

Door of Hope Biblical Counseling Ministry

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Brain Teasers



(Find answers on Page 8)

1. You have the misfortune to own an unreliable clock. This one loses exactly 24 minutes every hour. It is now showing 3:00am and you know that it was correct at midnight, when you set it. The clock stopped 1 hour ago, what is the correct time now?
2. Daniel, my son, is exactly one fifth of my age. In 21 years time, I will be exactly twice his age. My wife is exactly seven times older than my daughter, Rachel. In 8 years time, my wife will be three times older than Rachel. How old are Daniel and Rachel now?
3. After a day picking strawberries I had a basket full. I ate 5 and gave Jonathan half of the remaining. I then ate another 3 and gave Melvin one third of the remaining. I ate another 6 and then gave Rosie two thirds of the remaining. I now had 34 strawberries left. How many did I start with?

Focus on The Family

Will The Spark Ever Come Back?

Over the past couple of years, I have asked my husband to make some changes to show me that he loves me rather than just telling me with words.

He has made a lot of those changes and I'm very proud of him for that. Unfortunately, I thought it would change my feelings for him. It hasn't. I don't know what to do. He is head over heels in love with me, but I just don't feel the same. I want to. He kisses me and I feel nothing. I almost feel void of emotion. I've shut down. I want to love him but I'm not attracted to him and love him only as a friend. I just want to feel something that I don't.

Is there anyone out there who has felt this way and the spark magically came back? I don't want him to know how I feel because it's not within his control anyway. I don't want to hurt him. I'm crying as I write this.

Now I just feel worse about it. My life is becoming a dull routine. Don't get me

wrong, God has richly blessed me. I don't want to sound as if I'm having a pity party. I have beautiful children, wonderful family and friends. I guess I just need to know from someone that's been through this --- do I just suck it up and accept contentment? Is this all there is? I've prayed, but God is silent right now. I know he's trying to pull me closer to him, but my hurt takes over each time I study the word or pray. I just break down and cry. What do I do?

Part II: Follow-Up letter

I have spent the last few weeks pouring myself into God's word and prayer. My husband is doing the same. Although I always knew this, I have come to a realization in my life that Satan truly is a MASTER OF LIES!!!!!! I cannot always trust my emotions, but I can always trust God's word to be true. I love my husband. He's not perfect. He never will be. Unfortunately, neither will I-- not on this Earth anyway.

My husband and I have come to the revelation in our lives that everything has to be

measured against that standard -- God's Word. I know that God has a plan for us. Just as I try to grow my children into loving, caring adults, He's growing me in His image. I have to model unconditional love for my husband for the benefit of my relationship with God, my relationship with my husband, and for the benefit of my children. I am finally waking up to the reality that it is when I fall away from these truths that I become vulnerable and easily deceived. God is so good.

My prayer for the last couple of years has been for me to see my husband through God's eyes, and for the first time I can say that I do. I know that if I stay in the Word this will remain true. I don't always understand the trials and tribulations of this life, but I know my God is sovereign. I know that I can count on him.

The battle isn't over. I have to remain in the Word and prayer. At least I know that Jesus will be victorious over all of it!

~Anonymous



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